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January 21, 2004

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Thomas L. Garthwaite, M.D.
Director and Chief Medical Officer

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Thomas L. Garthwaite", is written over the printed name and title.

SUBJECT: **BIOTERRORISM ACTION PLAN QUARTERLY STATUS REPORT**

As requested by your Board, this is the quarterly status report on activities related to the bioterrorism action plan.

Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Funds

The National Bioterrorism Hospital Preparedness Program (NBHPP) Cooperative Agreement Application for Fiscal Year (FY) 2003 (August 31, 2003 - August 30, 2004) was approved and the Notice of Grant Award (NGA) for the \$15,583,364 that is being allocated to the Department of Health Services (DHS) was received on September 26. Subsequent to this, DHS was notified that a supplemental award of \$600,000 was awarded to the County. This grant award has recently been approved by your Board.

The NBHPP is expanding participation in the grant to include non-participating 9-1-1 receiving hospitals and non-9-1-1 receiving hospitals. To date, 11 additional acute care hospitals have indicated interest in participating. Agreements are being developed and will be brought to your Board for approval.

As part of the NBHPP, the concept of Disaster Resource Centers (DRC) is being developed. Select hospitals will be designated as DRCs and have the responsibility for disaster planning for the medical community in a geographic area. The DRC concept is being developed to address issues related to surge capacity. The concept is intended as a starting point to develop plans, relationships and procedures for responding to a major terrorist event. Outcomes associated with this program include the following:

- Enhance surge capacity for hospitals through the provision of ventilators, pharmaceuticals, medical/surgical supplies and large tent shelters to provide treatment to victims of a terrorist event or other public health emergency.
- Enhance hospital planning and cooperation in a geographical area to include planning regarding surge capacity. This planning should address the use of non-hospital space to shelter and treat mass casualties, including the role of local community health centers and clinics.

To date, 11 hospitals have indicated interest in being designated as DRCs. Agreement amendments are being developed and will be brought to your Board for approval.

On November 18 - 20, 2003, eight members of the NBHPP planning committee attended the *Bioterrorism: Tools for Planning and Preparedness - A workshop for State and Regional Bioterrorism Decisionmakers and Responders*, sponsored by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality. The focus of the conference was to assist health system leaders who are responsible for developing regional plans to prepare for possible bioterrorist attacks and other public health emergencies by providing tools that can be incorporated into the NBHPP.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Funds

On October 14 - 17, 2003, Los Angeles County Department of Health participated in Mayor James Hahn's Joint City/County Emergency Management Summit where Dr. Jonathan Fielding presented on the threats of emerging infectious diseases.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the source of Los Angeles County's \$29 million for bioterrorism preparedness, conducted a site visit on October 21 and 22, 2003 to review the development of the Strategic National Stockpile Plan, which would provide medicines to all residents in the case of a bioterrorist attack or other emerging infectious disease. CDC was satisfied with the progress that was made and anticipates the next site visit and exercise of the plan will demonstrate ongoing progress.

On November 24 and 25, 2003, the Department hosted a delegation of health professionals from the Public Health system responsible for managing the Suspected Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) outbreak in Toronto, Canada. The delegates gave presentations on case management, risk communication, quarantine/isolation and the impact on the hospital system. Lessons learned from their experience were incorporated into the development of the Los Angeles County SARS Plan.

In December 2003, the Department completed the first draft of the SARS Plan. This plan outlines how DHS will manage the public health and hospital activities of this type of outbreak and addresses issues involving quarantine and isolation.

Incident Command System training is underway and ongoing for public health managers as a requirement for the CDC Bioterrorism Grant. This training will be instrumental in managing Public

Health's response to all types of disasters, including bioterrorist events and other disasters, when there are other agencies involved such as Law, Fire and Emergency Management.

CDC and HRSA Joint Activities

On December 12, 2003, the Department completed the Final Working Version of the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) Plan for the Los Angeles County Operational Area, with the approved contractor, Community Research Associates, Inc. Glen Tao, Pharm. D., Chief Pharmacist, functioning as the SNS Coordinator, will now maintain this plan. The next step involves education and training of the staff that will be tasked to operationalize the plan in the event of a disaster or terrorist incident.

Other Terrorism Preparedness Funds

The United States Department of Homeland Security, Office of Domestic Preparedness (ODP) Grant Programs provides grants to support regional planning and cooperation between first responders defined as police, fire and emergency medical services (EMS).

In July, the core cities of Los Angeles (LA) and Long Beach (LB) received the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) - Part II grants. Each city manages the grant for their city, however the County Office of Emergency Management (OEM) is also involved in the oversight. The Department has been actively involved in these grants, participating on the Work Group, as well as, serving as a member of the Approval Authority. The Work Group was tasked with meeting the grant requirements, which included the completion of a needs assessment, developing an urban area homeland security strategy and developing a budget. The Department participated in all these activities receiving \$100,000 from the LA UASI grant and \$88,000 from the LB UASI grant.

In October 2003, the EMS Agency was notified that the application for the sustainment grant for the Metropolitan Medical Response System (MMRS) was approved for the \$250,000 that is being allocated to DHS. This grant award is being brought to your Board for approval.

Other Terrorism/Disaster Preparedness Activities

In October 2003, the Federal Department of Homeland Security placed the Disaster Medical Assistance Team (DMAT) on Alert activation. During an alert, all volunteer members are contacted to assess their availability for a deployment. A 35-team member roster is then submitted to the Department of Homeland Security. These team members must then respond within 4 to 8 hours if requested by the Federal government. Additionally, all equipment and supplies (referred to as the Basic Load) needed to support the team and their response is loaded on to trucks to ensure a rapid deployment.

On October 24 - 26, 2003, the DMAT participated in the State Back to Basics exercise.

In November 2003, the EMS Agency provided medical and health support to the Wildland Fires, through the Regional Disaster Medical and Health Program.

On November 13, 2003, the annual Statewide Medical and Health Exercise was conducted. This exercise involves the Department and all acute care hospitals responding to a disaster. This year's scenario involved terrorist attacks with conventional explosive at various venues throughout the County. Over 60 hospitals participated in this exercise.

On December 3, 2003, the Department conducted a SARS outbreak tabletop exercise. This exercise involved law enforcement, fire and health personnel. Additionally representative from schools and business organizations also participated.

On December 16, 2003, your Board approved a lease for the Disaster Staging Facility (DSF). The Department anticipates occupancy by April. The DSF will be headquarters for the DMAT and National Medical Response Team West (NMRT-W), which are grant funded and managed by the EMS Agency. Additionally, the SNS Planning and Mass Prophylaxis Units, which are grant funded through the CDC grant, will be housed at this location.

On December 21, 2003, NMRT-W was placed on alert activation in response to the Homeland Security Alert level being raised from yellow to orange. It is unknown at this time how long the NMRT-W will remain on alert.

On January 13, the DMAT was placed on alert activation and will remain on alert until February 2.

As requested, I will continue to provide quarterly updates on these grants and terrorism preparedness activities. Please let me know if you have any questions.

TLG:cg:kf
203:006 and C/R 111:005

Attachment

c: Chief Administrative Officer
County Counsel
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors